Tybalt in a Bloody Sheet, Paris in the Tomb:

Speculations on Doubling and Staging

in *Romeo and Juliet*

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For scholars who have come to respect Shakespeare's plays as theatrical scripts, the interpretive enterprise might best begin at the end. Characteristically a crowd scene, assembling all surviving speaking actors along with the bodies of some who have not survived, the final scene of a Shakespeare play provides occasion for a headcount, which, in turn, urges consideration of the relationship between double casting, well established as Elizabethan stage practice, and the dramatic strategies of the play. Reading Shakespeare theatrically, for the cues and clues to production that are built into the textual design, within the context of what we know about Elizabethan theatrical practices, may provide the best opportunity we have to conceptualize the original stagings of the plays.

The present reading of the final scene of *Romeo and Juliet* is offered as a model of a process that, as Maurice Charney puts it, thinks of the "written text and its realization in performance at one and the same time" (24). Though its analysis is particular to that early tragedy, its method has implications for all of Shakespeare's plays, and its conclusions, though merely plausible speculations in their present form, may, in conjunction with other such conclusions, reveal patterned connections between theatrical staging and dramatic design. The emphasis of the first part of the reading is on double casting, the second on staging the final scene. Both parts grow out of the assumption that two comments involving Romeo's encounters at and in the Capulet tomb—Romeo's question "Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?" (Bevington 5.3.97) and Paris' dying
request, "Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet" (5.3.73)—have theatrical force.

In reading **Romeo and Juliet** theatrically, I began by noticing that the final scene requires thirteen speaking parts, including four by characters newly introduced (three Watchmen and Paris' Page). With Julia Engelen, Giorgio Melchiori, John C. Meagher, and others, I noticed the absence of Lady Montague (whose husband announces her seemingly gratuitous death), Benvolio (who disappears after 3.1, his absence explained in Q1 by Montague's announcement of his death), and the Nurse (whose absence is unexplained). After establishing physical possibilities of doubling by an analysis of the Folio text, with Q1 (1597), Q2 (1599), and modern editions close by, I was left with casting choices involving several of the play's approximately forty speaking roles. I found myself attracted to Stephen Booth's suggestion that the actor who played Mercutio and Paris played the Prince as well, even though both Paris and the Prince appear, at different times, in the final scene (115, 130n), and I found myself intrigued by a doubling not yet proposed: that one actor played both Tybalt and the Nurse.

From the final scene, I worked my way back into the play to examine patterns that might lend plausibility to these theatrical sharings. After rereading the speeches of characters who could, logistically, be theatrically paired, I was persuaded that Booth's proposal that doubling in Shakespeare worked "adjectivally—to inform, comment on, and, perhaps, augment the events enacted" (108)—was potentially as credible an argument as Joan Hartwig's concerning Shakespeare's analogical scenes. Moreover, I became convinced that Shakespeare expected his audience to recognize actors in their double or multiple roles and that he sometimes invited that recognition through the play's dramatic design. In particular, the text revealed a habitual, sometimes contrived avoidance of contact between certain characters; an absence/presence dynamic coincident with the restraints that doublings impose; and a self-referentiality with respect to doubled characters similar to that involved in disguise. Having worked through the possibilities and plausibilities of casting, I was able to propose a way of staging 5.3 that respects the theatrical significance of Tybalt in a bloody sheet and Paris in the tomb.
Avoiding Contact

IN THE FOLIO TEXT OF *ROMEO AND JULIET*, the Nurse appears in twelve scenes: 1.3, 1.5, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5. Tybalt appears in three scenes: 1.1, 1.5, and 3.1 (and, conceivably, as a corpse in 5.3). Full cast modern productions, insensitive to the ways in which doublings in the Elizabethan theatre precluded the simultaneous presence of certain characters, generally bring the Nurse on stage for Tybalt's death scene (3.1). It is important to notice, though, that in neither Quarto nor in the Folio is the Nurse specifically mentioned in the stage direction, nor are lines attributed or addressed to her.4

Similarly, modern productions generally assume the simultaneous presence of Tybalt and the Nurse at the Capulet ball. But a careful reading of 1.5 reveals that neither of the Quartos nor the Folio provides stage directions for Tybalt's entrance or the Nurse’s. Clearly Tybalt is on stage by line 55, when, angered by the presence of Romeo, he complains to his uncle. Tybalt does have an exit line—"I will withdraw" (1.5.92)—in both Quartos and the Folio and a prescribed exit in Q2 and F as well (1.5.93). Nineteen lines and two pilgrim kisses after Tybalt's exit, the Nurse speaks her first line (1.5.112). It is a summons from Lady Capulet to her daughter, a summons for Juliet to join her. If the Nurse has received this instruction from Lady Capulet directly, presumably the Nurse, like Juliet's mother, has not been a presence at the ball.5 Her entrance, then, might well have been motivated by the message she must deliver. And it might well have been made possible by the exit of Tybalt.6 The Nurse remains on stage for the remainder of the scene, and Tybalt does not reappear. While both are present in 1.5, then, there is good reason to believe that, in the original staging, the two were not present at the same time. And there is good reason to conclude that the design of the scene may at least in part have been determined by the necessities of doubling.

Mercutio is present in five scenes—1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.4, and 3.1, dying in the last. Paris appears in five scenes as well—four of them after Mercutio's death (3.4, 4.1, 4.5, and 5.3) and one before (1.2). The Prince appears three times: in 1.1, 3.2, and 5.3. In all but two cases, a full scene intervenes between the appearances of any of the three characters, making the trebling logistically possible. In the two cases in which two characters
appear in adjacent scenes, the number of intervening lines lends plausibility to the assumption that there would have been sufficient time for the actor to effect a costume change. The Prince’s exit from 1.1 occurs at line 103, leaving 135 lines of the scene yet to be played before Paris needs to appear, with Capulet, in 1.2. And between Mercutio’s exit in 3.1 at line 107 and the Prince’s entrance at line 139, thirty-two lines—and the fight between Romeo and Tybalt—intervene.

The fight scene is a particularly telling one when viewed from the perspective of theatrical doubling, for the treatment of the two dead men’s corpses differs. Tybalt dies onstage, his body remaining for the Prince and the others to see. Mercutio, however, dies offstage: “‘Help me into some house, Benvolio, / Or I shall faint’ . . . Exit . . . Enter Benvolio . . . ‘O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead!’” (3.1.104-5, 115).7 Mercutio’s insistence on leaving the stage is curious, since it leaves Shakespeare with only one body, Tybalt’s, to display at the end of the scene. It is hard not to imagine the visual force that the presence of two dead youths would have had for both the assembled crowd and the audience. But when one notices—as Engelen did in 1926 (78-79)—that the Prince must make an entrance for the final part of the scene, one understands that theatrical necessity may account for Mercutio’s dying offstage.

Once again, the Capulet ball presents a special challenge to the playwright designing a crowd scene with a limited cast. Meagher, who pairs Mercutio and Paris but stops short of proposing a trebling, concludes that Paris is not at the Capulet feast because Mercutio is. In a note, he offers, tentatively, another possibility: that the actor plays both roles at the ball. Since neither speaks and since the stage is crowded, the actor might appear in several places at several times, sometimes as Mercutio and sometimes as Paris (13, 13n-14n). Although this is not a speculation that I can pursue with any authority, I might add that, since Mercutio is masked, the actor could quite readily have been two characters in quick succession simply by holding, or not holding, the mask to his eyes (or, if Paris was also masked, by alternating visors).8 More importantly, though, is that, while full cast modern productions almost certainly include both Paris and Mercutio in the scene, Elizabethan doubling might have precluded the presence of one. And here, because Mercutio is present in the processional en route to the ball, because the stage direction keeps the young maskers on stage (“They march about the stage, and Servingmen come forth with napkins”), and because Capulet’s “Welcome, gentlemen!”
would seem, then, to be directed to those maskers, including Mercutio, I would conclude with Meagher that Paris was not on stage.\textsuperscript{9} (No one, incidentally, has asked why Capulet did not invite the Prince to the affair.)

\textit{The Absence/Presence Dynamic}

My conclusion regarding Paris’ absence, however, differs in one respect from Meagher’s. Meagher points to the clear preparation for Paris’ presence at the ball. In 1.2, Capulet invites the County to attend:

\begin{quote}
This night I hold an old accustom’d feast,
Where.to I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you, among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
\end{quote}

(1.2.20-23)

In 1.3, Lady Capulet, preparing her daughter for marriage to Paris, informs Juliet that “This night you shall behold him at our feast” (1.3.81). Meagher sees the relationship between this preparation and the staging of the Capulet ball as a default on a promise, a dramatic failing which he and others are willing to overlook given the theatrical restraints (10). I prefer to see Shakespeare’s promise as a theatrical strategy. Knowing that Paris could not materialize if Mercutio were at the ball, Shakespeare might well have been offering the verbal equivalent of his presence—in effect inviting the audience to believe, even in the absence of ocular proof, that he was there. I would prefer to think that Shakespeare knew his audience well enough to know that the promise of Paris’ presence did not commit him to producing Paris at the ball. Rather, for an audience that understood the scene theatrically, the promise was sufficient to establish a presence that could not be achieved.

The same absence/presence dynamic functions, retrospectively, in 3.1 and 3.2 as well, with the Nurse. Modern productions that include the Nurse in Tybalt’s death scene may well be prompted by the Nurse’s claim in 3.2 that “I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes— . . . I swounded at the sight” (3.2.52, 56). To Juliet, the Nurse styles herself a witness, providing precise details of the “piteous corse” (3.2.54). For an audience, her report creates the impression of presence even when there was none.

The dynamic, I believe, is an important one, for, as I will discuss shortly, it is also preparation for the final scene, in which Tybalt appears and does not appear in the bloody sheet.
Self-Referentiality

Before turning to the final scene, I would like to look more specifically at the connecting language of the play, language that links characters in a kind of self-referentiality similar to that used by Shakespeare's many disguised characters in other plays. In his illuminating study of Shakespearean comedy, Bertrand Evans discusses discrepancies in awareness as a source of comedy. An audience, knowing something a character does not, takes pleasure in its superior knowledge. Often the audience becomes privy to that knowledge through another character, whose level of awareness matches its own, who confides, directly or indirectly, in the audience. The range of theatrical devices that Shakespeare uses to achieve the effect is wide:

... multiple discrepancies both among participants and between them and us were created by deceptive practices of several sorts—wearing disguise, overhearing, overpeering, feigning ignorance, exchanging identities, secret conspiring, outright lying. (34)

One special pleasure for both Elizabethan and modern audiences issues from the disguise. The convention here is that the audience, unlike many of the characters on stage, is not deceived. It knows Viola is Cesario, Rosalind is Ganymede, the Duke is the Friar, Edgar is Mad Tom, Portia is the doctor of laws. In many such cases, Shakespeare fashions particular lines to reflect the knowledge the disguised character and the audience share, that, as Viola/Cesario says, "I am not that I play" (1.5.180). The Duke in Measure for Measure, for example, responding to Lucio's taunts, replies, as the Friar, "I protest I love the Duke as I love myself" (5.1.346). Henry V, wearing Erpingham's cloak, walks among the soldiers, remarking "I think the King is but a man, as I am" (4.1.101). Julia in Two Gentlemen, disguised as a boy, replies to Silvia's "Dost thou know her?" with "Almost as well as I do know myself" (4.4.141-42).

Since Elizabethan audiences familiar with theatrical companies and practices would almost certainly have expected double and triple casting, it is reasonable to infer that Shakespeare extended this self-referentiality beyond that of the character in disguise to the actor playing more than one role. For such an actor, after all, embodies another permutation of the disguise, ontologically and circumstantially ripe for the playwright/actor to explore. Indeed, self-referential verbal connections between and
among the characters one actor plays are apparent in both theatrical sharings I have proposed. Immediately after Benvolio helps Mercutio off-stage in 3.1, for example, Romeo offers a brief lament that begins with a description of Mercutio: “This gentleman, the Prince’s near ally” (3.1.108). How “near” the Prince and Mercutio were allied must surely have been apparent to an audience that heard the angry Prince, appearing after the bloody fray, describe Mercutio’s death: “I have an interest in your hate’s proceeding, / My blood for your brawls doth lie a-bleeding” (3.1.186-87). The kinship resonates in 5.3, when Romeo identifies Paris, the latest casualty, as “Mercutio’s kinsman” (5.3.74) and the Prince, surveying death, speaks to the losses that Capulet and Montague have sustained and adds, “And I, for winking at your discords too / Have lost a brace of kinsmen” (5.3.294-95).

Similarly, if one actor played both the Nurse and Tybalt on the Elizabethan stage, then the Nurse’s reaction to Tybalt’s death must surely have been a source of pleasure for the audience. For when the actor describes the corpse, he is, in effect, describing himself. Speaking of the wound on Tybalt’s “manly breast” (3.2.53), he most likely would have indicated his own breast, now decidedly female. The Nurse continues her self-referential lament: “O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!” (3.2.61). With the Nurse—and the actor—the audience must surely have marveled “That ever I should live to see thee dead!” (3.2.63).

James L. Calderwood describes Shakespeare’s dramaturgy as “something of the in-and-outness of psychologists’ ambiguous figures, at one moment receding from him into its own seemingly autonomous fictive reality and at the next extrorsing to present itself as his dependent, a tenuous extension of his own playwriting and directorial skills” (11-12). The kind of self-referentiality that I have described, like other metatheatrical devices in Shakespeare, extends the audience’s recognition beyond the illusion of the fictional world, engaging it actively in the simultaneous and multidimensional dynamic of the theatrical event. As Booth puts it, one of “the unsettling but enriching effects” of Shakespeare’s dramaturgy issues from his making “indivisible” “an audience’s two incompatible consciousnesses” (“of the events portrayed” and “the actual theatrical events”) (104, 103). Doubling, like the disguise, may well have provided an occasion for Shakespeare to compound such interplay, to engage and complicate the theatrical self-consciousness signaled by Bottom’s instruction—“tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver” (3.1.19-20)—and
by Hamlet's question of the Player—"What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, / That he should weep for her?" (2.2.559-60).

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The Final Scene

In his visit to the Capulet Tomb, Romeo sees three corpses: "Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris" (5.3.74); Juliet, whose "beauty makes / This vault a feasting presence full of light" (5.3.85-86); and Tybalt in a "bloody sheet" (5.3.97)—all three recorded in the long entrance speech that ends with Romeo's own death. How those corpses are positioned within the Capulet tomb has much to do with my proposal for theatrical sharings. For were we able to recover the original Elizabethan staging of 5.3, we would know better whether the actor playing Tybalt actually had to be in the burial shroud and we would know better whether the actor playing Paris would have been able to exit and reappear.

For my consideration of how the final scene of Romeo and Juliet might have been staged—and how my theatrical doublings would have worked—I return first to the absence/presence dynamic proposed earlier to suggest a relationship between it and Tybalt's corpse. Romeo's reference to the "bloody sheet" immediately recalls earlier descriptions of the corpse offered by the Nurse and by Juliet. In 3.2, the Nurse describes the slain body, emphasizing blood: "A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse; / Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood, / All in gore-blood" (3.2.54-56). Before drinking the Friar's potion in 4.3, Juliet speaks of her vision of death, twice referring to Tybalt in his shroud: "Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, / Lies fest'ring in his shroud" (4.3.42-43), "And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud" (4.3.52). The effect of both is to seal the association between the dead Tybalt and blood, a trope that serves Shakespeare well in the final scene. For, following his death, Tybalt remains a presence in the play, the bloody shroud becoming his emblem.

While repetition of verbal motifs is common to the play, I would like to think that theatrical strategy is at work as well, that Shakespeare is preparing his audience to recognize and to accept the bloody shroud, or even the mention of it, as the corpse of Tybalt because he could not produce the actor who played Tybalt as a corpse in the tomb. Romeo does
not mention Tybalt in the final scene of Q1, an omission that suggests Tybalt was not a presence. But in the Folio, he makes full use of the trope, reasserting the image as though the corpse were there.

Melchiori remarks that, for those interested in Elizabethan doubling, "The absences of some major characters in this all-on-stage scene . . . is more significant than their presence, because it suggests that the actors taking their parts are needed to impersonate other minor figures" (787). But I am speculating that the actor playing Tybalt doubled as the Nurse, and the Nurse is conspicuously absent from the final scene. Hence it is safe to conclude that the bloody sheet was not established so that the Nurse could appear. In fact, if this theatrical sharing were only a doubling, then the actor could have been in the bloody shroud and casting exigencies need not have shaped this part of the final scene. But if we assume economy of casting—and especially if we are attracted to Engelen's and Meagher's proposals that *Romeo and Juliet* was staged with a company of thirteen speaking actors—then extending the speculation entails inferring that the actor playing Tybalt and the Nurse played another role as well. (Here I am less willing to guess who the third character might have been. The possibilities are Balthasar—if the Nurse was played by a mature actor, as Melchiori insists [787]—or Paris' Page—if the Nurse was played by a boy, as Davies assumes.)

In order to sustain the argument regarding the bloody shroud, I had to imagine the three bodies in the tomb. Tybalt's, it is safe to conclude, is in a shroud. Juliet, however, is almost certainly not. When in 4.1 the Friar plots with Juliet, he describes what will happen to her when others believe she is dead:

> Then, as the manner of our country is,  
> In thy best robes uncovered on the bier  
> Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault  
> Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie. (4.1.109-12)

Though her cousin is in a shroud, Juliet will be dressed in her best robes and will remain uncovered—the custom, the Friar establishes, without regard for inconsistency, of their country. The Friar also establishes that Juliet will be borne on a bier, "a litter, a stretcher" (*OED*, with examples from 890 to 1851), "a movable stand on which a corpse, whether in a coffin or not, is placed before burial . . . and carried to the grave" (*OED*, with examples since 1000). The details of this passage provide important
clues to the staging of the final scene. The uncovered Juliet becomes accessible to Romeo and free to rise on her own volition; moreover, assuming that a "bier" is distinct from a "coffin"—"a box or chest in which a corpse is enclosed for burial" (OED, with examples since 1525)—her placement on a bier leaves her visible to Romeo, and to the audience, in the tomb.14

Tybalt, on the other hand, may not be on a bier, and he may not be visible to the audience. Juliet's reference to Tybalt as being "yet but green in earth" (4.3.42) and her earlier fearful speech to the Friar—"Or bid me go into a new-made grave / And hide me with a dead man in his tomb" (4.1.84-85)—imply that Tybalt may be in such a new grave, a grave, as yet uncovered, in the floor of the tomb. Were Romeo to ask his question of Tybalt's corpse while peering into the stage trap, the audience would need no evidence beyond the reference to the bloody sheet, and the actor would be free to assume his third role.

The use of the trap would provide another opportunity as well: it could serve as a repository for the body of Paris. Romeo accedes to Paris' request to "Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet" (5.3.73), and, on "Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd" (5.3.87), he apparently deposits the body somewhere within the tomb. In full cast modern productions, the placement of the body need be determined primarily by the visual design of the final scene: where should Paris' body lie in relation to those of the dead lovers? But in an Elizabethan production that had to allow for doubling, Paris needed to be deposited in a place where his body was visible to the Friar, the Chief Watchman, and others who remark on it but invisible to the audience. Booth—who, we will remember, proposes the trebling of Mercutio/Prince/Paris—notes that in some modern productions Paris' body is "dragged to the rear and is often actually invisible" when the Friar comments on its presence (130n). The trap would provide a more convenient means of concealing the body from the audience's sight while affirming its presence in the grave through characters' observations.15

Throughout this discussion, I have been referring to the Capulet tomb, clearly the setting for the final scene. The tomb is in a churchyard, where the earth is "loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves" (5.3.6). Paris is first to approach the tomb, the unhappy bridegroom strewing the canopy of Juliet's "bridal bed" with flowers and perfumed water (5.3.12). When Romeo and Balthasar arrive, Romeo receives from Balthasar a "mat-
tock” and a “wrenching iron” (5.3.22), the tools needed for his entrance into the tomb. Lying to Balthasar—“Why I descend into this bed of death / Is partly to behold my lady’s face, / But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger / A precious ring—a ring that I must use / In dear employment” (5.3.28-32)—Romeo dismisses his man and proceeds to force open the tomb: “Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death, / Gorg’d with the dearest morsel of the earth, / Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open” (5.3.45-47). Upon identifying Romeo, Paris attempts to apprehend the determined youth: “Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague! / Can vengeance be pursued further than death? / Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee” (5.3.54-56). The two fight at the entrance of the tomb, and Paris, dying, asks that Romeo open the tomb and lay his body within. What clues to staging might be found in these references to vertical and horizontal space: the “canopy” of “dust and stones,” Romeo’s “descending into this bed of death,” the “rotten jaws” that divide outside from inside, Paris’ plea to “Open the tomb”?

One student of the Elizabethan stage, after a “purposeful study” of this final scene, concludes that “Juliet’s tomb was represented by a trap . . . that it was a trap, and not a property tomb, which Romeo prised open, and that it was down the trap he afterwards put Paris’s body” (Lawrence 155). Lawrence surveys other plays of the period to provide examples of the grave trap. In Tourneur’s The Atheist’s Tragedy (1611), for example, the trap was most probably used for the gravel pit in Act Two, scene four, but Lawrence proposes that it was also used for the charnel house in Act Four, scene three, in which Charlemont conceals himself. Stage directions for both Charlemont and Juliet (Q1) use the word “rises,” which, for Lawrence, implies the trap.

For a time I entertained Lawrence’s hypothesis, assuming that the descent to which Romeo refers would have found physical representation on stage. But, finally, I could not accept an underground scene, a scene in which Romeo speaks from the platform, the unseen Juliet below, becoming visible to the audience only after Romeo dies and she revives. Theatrical necessity might have removed Mercutio’s body from the stage in 3.1 and Tybalt’s in 5.3, but only the word “descend” and the impulse toward consistency seemed to urge that Juliet, like Tybalt, be in the grave trap. I continued to respect the reference to vertical movement but felt that consistency, having already been invalidated as a theatrical principle by dressing Tybalt in a bloody sheet and Juliet in her best robes, could
not argue with force.

I then read Alan Dessen on the staging of the final scene. Dessen's work had earlier alerted me to the prevalence of implied stage directions in Shakespeare's plays. Now, however, his work was urging caution: perhaps dialogue indicating scenic design should be read not as directions for staging but as means of defining space without the use of properties. Asking whether the scene needs a "real" tomb, Dessen proposes a "'minimalist' interpretation" in which dialogue references "convey a sense of a tomb" ("Much Virtue" 136, 137). The possibility was intriguing, but the presence of three tombs in Henslowe's Diary (Foakes and Rickert 319) urged me to look further.

I read Scott McMillin's research on The Play of Sir Thomas More and was attracted to the possibility of its applicability to this play as well. Though there is no record of Romeo and Juliet's having been performed at the Rose, as was The Play of Sir Thomas More, Shakespeare's play could well have been designed for a similar space. Like the More play, it would appear to demand a curtained stage area, which, in McMillin's judgment, was an exception to normal platform staging (99). Noting that the inner-stage theory has been discredited by extensive research in staging (see 97n, 98n) and by the pictorial evidence of the Swan drawing, McMillin speaks of a large curtained pavilion that figured elsewhere in the action, a pre-set structure adjoining the tiring house facade that provided a space for extended and active interior scenes:

Larger curtained scenes, especially those that imply substantial action and dialogue within the curtained space, seem unlikely to have been staged in a confined remote space, and there is some agreement among scholars that an ample curtained pavilion or enclosure, perhaps one that was set up for occasional plays, was probably employed for large scenes of this sort. (99; see also 99n)

McMillin points out that plays that employed such a space would employ it in several scenes. The original version of The Play of Sir Thomas More, for example, contains six interior scenes, all requiring stage furnishings, that most probably used such a pavilion. In Romeo and Juliet, the structure could have been used for Friar Laurence's cell, Juliet's bedroom, and the Capulet tomb.

There seems almost certainly to have been a theatrical connection between Juliet's "death" scenes (4.3 and 4.4) and the tomb scene (5.3). For at the end of 4.3, she drinks the potion and, apparently, "fals upon
her bed within the Curtaines" (Q1) where, in the next scene, she is discovered by the Nurse, presumably the following morning. As others congregate and the laments for the intended bride cease, the Friar gives instructions: "Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him; / And go, Sir Paris. Everyone prepare / To follow this fair corse unto her grave" (4.5.91-93). After an interval filled by the Musicians; by Romeo, Balthasar, and the Apothecary; and by Friar Laurence and Friar John—and, presumably, by the passage of another day—the action moves to the Capulet monument, where Juliet is discovered once Romeo pries open the tomb. It is possible that a pavilion such as McMillin describes, which allows for concealment and discovery as well as for extended and crowded action, was used for both "death" scenes.

McMillin speaks to the thematic unity that complements the unity of theatrical place that the interior scenes in The Play of Sir Thomas More provides, a unity that might be claimed as well for Juliet's two "death" scenes. In 4.4 and 5.3, verbal images of marriage and death that appear throughout the play come together with particular force. The earlier scene begins with preparations for Juliet's wedding feast and ends with preparations to carry the would-be bride to the church and tomb. As the unhappy father surveys his child, he speaks of her marriage to death:

O son, the night before thy wedding day
Hath Death lain with thy wife. There she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded. (4.5.35-39)

Capulet's final lines in the scene transpose the mood and anticipate the change in setting to the Capulet tomb:

All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast,
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary. (4.5.84-90)

In addition to providing a space for interior scenes at the platform level, the pavilion would also have provided space for raised scenes at the roof level. As McMillin describes the staging of the execution scene in The Play of Sir Thomas More,
More climbs a ladder from the main stage to the scaffold at line 1915, and he is able to exit from the scaffold to the tiring-house when he is led to the block at the very end of the play. The latter point shows that the scaffold was adjoining the tiring-house facade rather than standing free on the platform. Moreover, the scaffold seems to have been in place at the start of the scene, for there is no hint that it was set up as part of the scene’s opening business. A raised acting area, projecting from the tiring-house facade and probably remaining in place throughout the action, answers the staging requirements of this scene.

The same structure could have provided a roof for the Capulet tomb, a place for Paris to stand when he strews flowers on the “canopy” of “dust and stones” (5.3.13) and for Romeo to stand when he speaks of descending. From the roof of the pavilion, Romeo could have descended on the “cords made like a tackled stair” (2.4.185) that earlier provided his escape from Juliet’s window—Juliet: “Then window, let day in, and let life out.” Romeo: “Farewell, farewell! One kiss, and I’ll descend” (3.5.41-42)—to the platform or, possibly, to the roof of the pavilion, where he could then have exited into the tiring-house, as More did. (As Juliet peers out her window at her departing husband, she records an imaginative perspective that may anticipate staging as well, for from above she is peering at the pavilion that will become the tomb: “methinks I see thee, now thou art so low; / As one dead in the bottom of a tomb” [3.5.55-56].) Similarly, Paris, initially on the roof of the pavilion, could have descended by the ropes to challenge Romeo, with whom he fights at the “stony entrance of this sepulcher,” where the Friar discovers “blood” and “gory swords” (5.3.140-42). Both Paris’ Page and Balthasar, like More, could have made their exits into the tiring-house from the roof of the pavilion, reentering later at the platform level.

The roofed pavilion may be one of the tombs that Henslowe inventories; more importantly, it precisely resembles the monument of Cleopatra described and sketched in Hodges (54-56). On the roof of this “impermanent special structure,” seven or eight feet high, without balustrade, there needed to be room for

Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, and two or more maids. There must be space for these to haul up the dying Antony, and to lay him, presumably with good visibility for the audience, before Cleopatra; and the place should presumably be suitable for staging the whole drama and poetry of their last parting.
Clearly, a structure large enough to contain such activity on its roof could have accommodated the full cast of characters and corpses who assemble in the Capulet tomb. And it could have contained as well the trap in the floor.\textsuperscript{17}

One other aspect of the staging of 5.3 should be mentioned, not because it has implications for the theatrical problems involving Tybalt and Paris but because it is so careful a part of Shakespeare's design. When the Friar approaches the tomb, he notices that the "dim monument" that Juliet earlier describes (3.5.202) is lit: "What torch is yond that vainly lends his light / To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern, / It burneth in the Capels' monument" (5.3.125-27). Though \textit{Romeo and Juliet} would have been staged in the full light of an Elizabethan afternoon, the scene, both outside the tomb and within, takes place in imagined darkness: the darkness of night outside the tomb, an absence of light within. To counter the imagined darkness, Shakespeare orchestrates the torches of Paris and Romeo, "illuminating" each segment of the scene. Paris and his Page enter with a torch, for example, so that the audience may identify them, but then Paris directs the boy to put out the torch "for I would not be seen" (5.3.2). When Romeo and Balthasar enter (on the roof of the pavilion, as I have proposed), Paris (also on the roof), seeing their torch, conceals himself with "Muffle me, night, awhile" (5.3.21)—a line with the same theatrical force as Oberon's "I am invisible" in \textit{A Midsummer Night's Dream} (2.1.186). Before dismissing his man, Romeo asks Balthasar to give him not only the mattock and wrenching iron but also the torch: "Give me the light" (5.3.25).\textsuperscript{18} Though Paris has recognized Romeo, Romeo has not seen Paris; only after he slays him does he peruse his face. As Romeo enters the tomb, either dragging or carrying the dead County, Romeo carries his torch as well. Within, the bright light that attracts the Friar, actually a natural function of the Elizabethan day, is theatrically achieved through the torch, assisted by Romeo's invitation to the audience to share in the feast of light for which Juliet's beauty is the source: "her beauty makes / This vault a feasting presence full of light" (5.3.85-86). The careful manipulation of light, in the form of both properties and language, is all in the service of creating a darkness that defied the natural condition outside, on top of, and within the pavilion.

McMillin's work on \textit{The Play of Sir Thomas More} helps in envisioning the staging of Shakespeare's final scene. Yet, in the absence of verifying records with respect to \textit{Romeo and Juliet}, and in the face of the minimal-
ist alternative Dessen offers, the pavilion must remain a speculation. It is a plausible speculation, though, not only because of the force of McMil-lin’s argument with respect to The Play of Sir Thomas More but also because the pavilion is consistent with a theatrical reading of the play’s dramatic design. With or without the pavilion, however, if we read theatrically the presence—or absence—of Tybalt in a bloody sheet and Paris in the tomb, we understand the extent to which Shakespeare’s text provides important clues as to how Elizabethans staged the play.

Theatrical companies from Mankind through the early seventeenth cen-tury (Bentley, Bevington, Greg) functioned with a relatively small group of principal actors; Shakespeare, connected with the Lord Chamberlain’s (and later the King’s) Men, wrote specifically for companies of such limited size. Given the historical evidence, it is incumbent upon us to attend to the internal clues as to how, and to what effect, doublings and treblings could have been accomplished. Reading Shakespeare theatrically may not produce definitive evidence with respect to any one play. But it offers the potential for discovering patterns that link spatial and verbal design to the particular circumstances of the Elizabethan theatrical company and stage.
Endnotes

1. Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, records the evidence for doubling in early Tudor drama. Books and essays that attend to doubling on the Elizabethan stage include Baldwin, Beckerman, Booth, Greg, Gurr, Lawrence, and Ringer. An important overlooked study that offers speculative casting charts for all of Shakespeare's plays is Engelen. Essays or portions of books on specific doubling possibilities include Abrams on *King Lear*, Berger on *Henry V*, McMillin on *The Book of Sir Thomas More*, McMillin on the theatrical implications of the plots of *The Dead Man's Fortune* and 2 Seven Deadly Sins, McMillin on *Henry VI* and *The Taming of A Sbrew*, Meagher on *Romeo and Juliet*, Melchiori on *Peter and Balthasar* in *Romeo and Juliet*, Taylor on *Henry V*, Wentersdorf on *The Taming of the Sbrew*, Thaler on *Julius Caesar*, and Gaw on the occurrence of actors' names in Shakespearean texts.

Like Booth, I am uncomfortable with the assumption, implicit in the work of Ringler and Lawrence, that sharers in Elizabethan companies would not have expected—or wanted—to double. I prefer to imagine, with Booth, that Bottom's desire to play Pyramus, Thisby, and the lion, even when his "chief humor" was "for a tyrant" (1.2.24), might more nearly reflect the attitude of the sharer, who enjoyed opportunities to display his virtuosity and, through doubling, to connect with the audience in special ways.

2. The "bad quarto" (Q1) of *Romeo and Juliet* was published in 1597, Q2 in 1599. Q2 was the source of subsequent quarto versions: Q3 (1609), Q4 (n.d.), Q5 (1637). The Folio (1623) was also derived from Q2; F1-F4 each reprinted its predecessor. Only Q1 and Q2, therefore, possess independent authority (Hoppe 57). Montague's Q1 lines read: "Dread Sovereigne, my Wife is dead to night, / And yong Benvolio is deceased too."

3. Hartwig claims that Shakespeare's plays "demonstrate what was a dramaturgical commonplace for his age: scenes tend to progress because of their analogical relationships with what precedes and what follows as much as by narrative causality" (3).

4. Q1, in fact, omits reference to others as well. Following Tybalt's death and Romeo's exit, the stage direction reads "Enter Citizens." After a brief exchange between "Watch." and Benvolio, another stage direction reads "Enter Prince, Capulet's wife." Until "Exeunt omnes," the exchange is among the Prince, Benvolio, and "M" (signifying "Mother," or Lady Capulet). The stage directions in Q2 (and F) read "Enter Citizens" and, several lines later, "Enter Prince, olde Mountague, Capulet, their wives and all." The exchange here is among the Prince, Benvolio, Capulet's Wife, and Capulet. Bevington and other editors correct an apparent error in attribution, making Montague, not Capulet, respondent to the Prince's "Who now the price of his deare blood doth owe": "Not Romeo Prince, he was Mercutios friend, / His fault concludes, but what the law should end, / The life of Tybalt."

5. Juliet and the Nurse tarry as the maskers leave, the younger woman asking questions about the young men, including Romeo. The scene ends with the stage direction "One calls within 'Juliet' " and with Juliet and Nurse exiting together, presumably in response to the call. The staging confirms that Lady Capulet has indeed summoned Juliet from a place other than the space defined by the Capulet ball.

6. Speaking of doubling in earlier Tudor drama, Bevington notices that "rapid change between roles is surprisingly common." Twenty-five lines seem to have provided sufficient time (approximately 100 seconds) for an actor to reappear as another character; there are, in fact, instances of changes taking place in as few as five lines (e.g., the
change from Piety to Ignorance in The Longer Thou Livest, 2.1229-1234). A change from a male role to a female role, however, may have required more time, since female costumes were more elaborate (From Mankind to Marlowe 95-96).

With respect to the proposal that the actor playing Tybalt reappeared as the Nurse within nineteen lines, it should be noted that the exchange between Romeo and Juliet includes implied stage business. While palming may be accomplished as the lines are spoken, kissing, twice prescribed by the language, necessarily adds time. Moreover, there is another implied stage direction in Capulet's "What!—Cheerly, my hearts!" (1.5.88), which could provide the opportunity to extend the offstage time afforded the actor needing to effect a costume change. At 1.5.25, Capulet orders the musicians to play; the stage direction notes, "Music plays, and they dance." Apparently, such activity has continued through Capulet's reproaching of Tybalt, when the older man's rising voice—"You are a princox, go! / Be quiet, or—more light, more light—For shame! / I'll make you quiet, what!"—and his concluding comment—"Cheerly, my hearts!" (1.5.86-88) —suggests he has not only attracted attention to the quarrel but intruded upon the festivities as well. If that intrusion is signaled by an interruption in the music and dancing, his "Cheerly, my hearts!" may be the cue to resume, in which case Tybalt's exit speech (probably an aside) and his exit may be accompanied by the resumption of music and dance, which could continue for some time before Romeo speaks his first line to Juliet.

7. In Q1, Mercutio also dies offstage, though he does not ask that Benvolio help him to "some house." Rather, he calls for a surgeon, whom a Boy (not in Q2 or F) goes to fetch. When the Boy returns with the announcement "Hee's come sir," Mercutio responds, "... come Benvolio, lend me thy hand: a poxe of your houses," and the two—and probably the Boy as well—"Exeunt." Several lines later, Benvolio enters with the news of Mercutio's death.

8. Bevington notes that "visors provided another means of rapid transformation": "In The Longer Thou Livest the dire retribution awaiting the unregenerate Moros appears as God's Judgment, 'with a terrible visure' (1.1748) and as Confusion 'with an ill fauoured visure, all thinges beside ill fauoured' " (1.1796) (From Mankind to Marlowe 92-93).

9. In Q1, the maskers are not directed to march about the stage, as they are in Q2 and F, nor do they have an exit line—lending credibility to the assumption that Mercutio remained a presence. In his speculative note, Meagher imagines that the conversation between Capulet and the elder Capulet might have provided Mercutio the opportunity to slip out of one masquing costume and into another. An extended speculation might be that, if Q2 represents a revision of Q1 (itself a speculation), then the introduction of the Servingmen sequence, absent from Q1, might have been styled to give the actor playing Mercutio more time to separate himself from the maskers and become Paris. If the actor did function in both roles in this scene, however, I prefer the less elaborate possibility of visor manipulation. But, as the next section will reveal, I much prefer arguing that no "dramaturgical stunt-pilotry" (Meagher 13n) was necessary.

10. These lines are absent from Q1. Booth proposes that the "family relationship among Escalus, Mercutio, and Paris is so haphazardly and casually established within the fiction, that it may have been registered only as the formal incorporation of a link already obvious to an audience that saw all three played by one actor" (115).

11. Actually, combining the Paris and Prince roles leaves me with a count of twelve rather than thirteen speaking actors needed for the final scene. With Engelen's (1926) and Meagher's essays in hand, I turned to the Capulet ball to count heads, discovering that the Tybalt/Nurse doubling could result in one less actor with a speaking role. I
turned, then, to a third crowd scene, 1.1, and discovered that an argument for twelve could be sustained here as well—provided the actor playing Juliet played Lady Montague (a character who speaks only three lines in her first appearance, is mute in her second, and, presumably, dies of grief). Though Engelen, Melchiori, and Meagher all pair Lady Montague with Paris' Page and Lawrence observes that "proof that leading female characters were ever doubled is wholly lacking" (72-73), I thought the possibility worth a note, for, in freeing Paris' Page from Lady Montague, it allowed two other speculations as to other roles that actor played: namely, Benvolio or Nurse/Tybalt.

12. In Engelen's scheme, theatrical sharings include Prince/Mercutio, Paris/Tybalt, alt, Balthasar/Peter, Friar/Benvolio, and Nurse/Paris' Page/Lady Montague. Melchiori also proposes Prince/Mercutio and Paris/Tybalt but pairs Nurse/Montague, Balthasar/Benvolio, and Paris' Page/Lady Montague. Meagher prefers Paris/Mercutio, Prince/Nurse, Friar/ Benvolio, and Balthasar/Peter. My proposal would also admit Friar/Benvolio, a plausible pairing that would need to overcome two sudden reappearances, in 2.4 and 3.1. But, as Meagher points out, "a Friar's habit is ample enough to hide Benvolio beneath it, and loose enough to be swiftly doffed" (13n). Melchiori discusses two inconsistencies in stage directions in Q2: "Enter Will Kemp" (4.5.102), where Peter is meant, and "Enter Romeo and Peter" (5.3.21), where Balthasar is meant. While the inconsistencies may suggest that the same actor played Balthasar and Peter, it could just as readily suggest, as Melchiori remarks, that Shakespeare had his source in mind when he erroneously wrote "Peter." For in Painter's The Palace of Pleasure, Romeo's servant is Pietro (778).

If the actor playing the Nurse and Tybalt also played Balthasar, then Romeo's discovery that he has slain Paris might have theatrical resonance. As he recognizes the man he has just slain as the County Paris, he tries to recall, "What said my man, when my betossed soul / Did not attend him as we rode? I think / He told me Paris should have married Juliet" (5.3.76-78). Within the text, Romeo is informed of Paris' interest in Juliet not by Balthasar but by the Nurse:

O, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lief see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the versal world. (2.4.196-202)

13. References in Shakespeare to shrouding as a burial practice include Twelfth Night 2.4.55-56 ("My shroud of white, stuck all with yew, / I, prepare it"); Hamlet 1.1.115-16 ("The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead / Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets"), Hamlet 5.1.94-97 ("A pick axe, and a spade, a spade, / For and a shrouding sheet; / O, a pit of clay for to be made / For such a quest is meet"), Othello 4.3.25-26 ("If I do die before thee, prithee shroud me / In one of those same sheets"), and Pericles 3.2.68-69 ("Shrouded in cloth of state, balmed and entreasued / With full bags of spices!"). Lines from Marston's Antonio's Revenge (1601) suggest that the shroud left the face uncovered:

Piero: Rot there, thou cerecloth that enfolds the flesh
Of my loathed foe; moulder to crumbling dust;
Oblivion choke the passage of thy fame! (2.1.1-3)

Pandulpho: Methinks I hear a humming murmur creep
From out his gellied wounds. Look on those lips,
Those now lawn pillows, on whose tender softness
Chaste modest speech, stealing from out his breast,
Had wont to rest itself, as loath to post
From out so fair an inn; look, look, they seem to stir
And breathe defiance to black obloquy. (2.1.10-16)
Ophelia's song suggests an uncovered face as well: "They bore him barefac'd on the bier" (*Hamlet* 4.5.166).

I suggest inconsistency not because Tybalt, who has been in the tomb for three days, is in a shroud but because the bloody shroud would imply that he was wrapped immediately rather than dressed for transport to the vault as Juliet was and, presumably, shrouded and buried later. (Tybalt died on Monday, Romeo and Juliet's wedding day. Though Juliet was originally scheduled to marry Paris on Thursday and to drink the forty-two-hour potion on Wednesday night, Capulet's acceleration of the wedding date forces her to drink the potion on Tuesday night. She is, therefore, buried on Wednesday, her intended [revised] wedding day, and awakens in the tomb, following forty-two comatose hours, on Thursday.)

14. Examples of coffins in Shakespeare include *Richard II* 5.6.30-31 ("Great King, within this coffin I present / Thy buried fear. Herein all breathless lies / The mightiest of thy greatest enemies"), *1 Henry VI* 1.1.18-19 ("Henry is dead and never shall revive. / Upon a wooden coffin we attend"), *Richard III* 1.2.36-38 ("Villains, set down the corse, or, by Saint Paul, / I'll make a corse of him that disobeys" . . . "My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass"), and *Julius Caesar* 3.2.108 ("My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar"). The stage direction to 2.1 in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* makes it clear that the shrouded corpse referred to in note 11 above was in a coffin:

> Enter two mourners with torches, two with streamers, CASTILIO and FOROBOSCO with torches, a Herald bearing Andragio's helm and sword, the coffin, MARIA supported by LUCIO and ALBERTO, ANTONIO by himself, PIERO and STROZZO talking, GALEATZO and MATZAGENTE, BALURDO and PANDULPHO; the coffin set down, helm, sword, and streamers hung up, placed by the Herald, whilst ANTONIO and MARIA wet their handkerchiefs with their tears, kiss them, and lay them on the hearse, kneeling.

The *OED* records the occasional interchangeable use of "bier" and "casket" between 1526 and 1601, which is apparently the case in the final lines of *Richard II*. The stage direction that opens the final sequence establishes that the body of Richard is in a coffin: "Enter Exton, with the coffin" (5.6.29). Yet King Henry's exit line is "Grace my mournings here, / In weeping after this untimely bier" (5.6.51-52). Because Shakespeare's references to coffins elsewhere suggest a box in which a body is enclosed, his reference to a bier in *Romeo and Juliet* would seem not to conflate the two. Juliet's body was apparently not concealed in a coffin.

15. Alternatively, the tomb might have contained two coffins, in addition to Juliet's bier: one supposedly containing the shrouded Tybalt and one awaiting Juliet. In that case, Romeo could have deposited Paris' body in the coffin reserved for Juliet, assuming that a false bottom, opening into the trap, or a false back could permit an unnoticed exit. Henslowe's *Diary* does list two coffins in the 1598 inventory of the properties of the Lord Admiral's Men (Foakes and Rickert 320).

16. Nagler notes that the first performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, in 1595, was probably at Burbage's Theatre; he also notes that the Swan was built that year (53).

17. Though evidence for the location of the trap is contradictory, and it may be that traps were variously located in different theatres, Lawrence speaks of their placement, noting that the trap could have been at the rear stage. If it were so located in the theatre at which *Romeo and Juliet* was performed, the pavilion could have worked in concert with it (145-75). Nagler, examining the pavilion for *Antony and Cleopatra* with different conclusions, notes Dover Wilson's suggestion in The New Shakespeare edition that the structure would have been placed "over the central trap, whence Cleopatra climbs a concealed stair to the flat roof" (61-62).
18. Curiously, Romeo does not request the light in Q1. If Q2 represents a revision, it might be argued that Shakespeare realized that Romeo, within the dark tomb, was without a theatrical source of light and was prompted to add the line—admittedly a speculation based on a speculation. For more on "Elizabethan Darkness and Modern Lighting," see Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions*, 70-83.

Works Cited


